

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed April 15, 2004 has been received and the Examiner's comments carefully reviewed. Claims 1-3, 29, 37-37 and 45 have been allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification. Claims 10 and 23 have been amended. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 8-9, 11-12, 19-22, 38-39, and 41-44 have been cancelled. Claims 1-3, 10, 23, 29, 31-37, and 45 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, 21, 22, 41, 42, 43 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Alt (U.S. Patent 6,217,607). The Examiner also rejected claims 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21, 22, 38 39 41, 42, 43 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yan (U.S. Patent 5,843,172). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, but have cancelled claims 8-9, 11-12, 19-22, 38-39, and 41-44 to advance this application to allowance. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original subject matter via a continuing application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3, 29, 31-37 and 45 are allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification.

The Examiner objected to claims 10 and 23, but indicated that claims 10 and 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form incorporating all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification. Claims 10 and 23 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of base claim 9. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 10 and 23 are in condition for allowance.

SUMMARY

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 1-3, 10, 23, 29, 31-37, and 45) is in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the below-

listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

Although certain arguments regarding patentability are set forth herein, there may be other arguments and reasons why the claimed invention is patentably distinct. Applicants reserve the right to raise these arguments in the future.



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Respectfully submitted,

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